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**SIGNIFICANT POLITICAL-MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS  
IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA**

November 1984

Prepared by the Federal Research Division of  
the Library of Congress under an interagency agreement

Analysts: Eunice Charles  
Nancy Drexler  
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## PREFACE

This chronology is organized by region, country, and date of event. The date of event is sometimes difficult to determine because it varies from source to source. Some sources cite the actual date of the incident whereas others appear to use the official news release dateline. When possible, the actual date of the occurrence is listed.

Analysts contributing to this chronology are Eunice Charles, Nancy Drexler, Mary Louise Harmon, Kenneth Liberstein, Moses Pinkston, and Rachel Warner.

**SIGNIFICANT POLITICAL-MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS  
IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA**

**November 1984**

**HORN OF AFRICA**

**Ethiopia**

**November**

Drought victims continue to pour into relief centers. British, American, Italian, Soviet, and East and West German aircraft are able to transport inland food shipments which had piled up at the port of Assab. Fighting between government troops and insurgent groups in Tigre and Eritrea continues to hamper food distribution. Ethiopia announces its intention to resettle several million refugees from the drought-stricken northern highlands to more fertile land in the south and southwest. The first group of drought victims is moved on 16 November. Western aid donors are asked to assist in the resettlement scheme but they question the feasibility of the plan and fear that people will be resettled against their will on state-run collective farms. Spokesmen for the Tigre People's Liberation Front charge that the plan is designed to depopulate areas where rebels enjoy support.

**mid to late  
November**

Fighting between Somali National Movement (SNM) guerrillas and government forces in northwest Somalia is reported. The SNM reports having overrun a government base 15 km north of Hargeisa in an attack launched on 13 November. It also claims to control mountainous areas around Shaykh and Gabile and to have inflicted heavy losses on government reinforcements brought to the area. In a 27 November broadcast the SNM claims to have cut roads in the northwest and to have launched a joint offensive with the Democratic Front for the Salvation of Somalia (DFSS). While these reports are probably exaggerated, they indicate that armed SNM guerrillas have been able to infiltrate the region.

**24-28 November**

A Somali Airlines Boeing 707 carrying 130 people is hijacked by three Somalis believed to be an army captain and two soldiers. After being refused landing in Aden, PDRY, the plane lands in Addis Ababa. The hijackers demand the release of political prisoners, including seven high school students who they claim are scheduled for execution. They threaten to blow up the plane and passengers if their demands are not met. After 4 days the hijacking ends. All passengers are released, Somalia says it will not execute the high school students, the hijackers are granted political asylum in Ethiopia, and they are allowed to hold a press conference. This incident gives international publicity to the Somali opposition, provides Ethiopia an opportunity to criticize the Somali regime in the

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### SAHEL

#### Chad

6 November 300 soldiers, constituting the first contingent of the Zairean Detachment in Chad, return to Kinshasa from N'Djamena in accordance with the withdrawal decision announced in October. Some 2,500 Zairean troops had been sent to Chad in June 1983 to guard key points in the capital until the arrival months later of the French contingent. Their withdrawal is part of the French/Libyan agreement to withdraw foreign troops from Chad. However, Zairean training of Chadian commandos continues in Zaire. In early November, 500 Chadian commandos complete training and are replaced by another 500 who arrive at the Commando Training Center in Kotakoli.

11 November In a joint statement Libya and France announce the completion of their troop withdrawals from Chad. The withdrawal of some 5,000 Libyan and 3,200 French troops began in October.

15 November French President Mitterrand meets with Libya's Qadhafi in Greece amidst charges from Chad and the United States that Libyan troops remain in Chad. Mitterrand acknowledges that 1,000 to 1,500 Libyans are still in Chad, while the United States puts the number at some 3,000 troops. On 23 November a French report confirms the 3,000 troop figure. Although the French declare that their troops will return to Chad if the Libyans act against the Habre government, Habre is increasingly concerned with the Libyan presence.

16 November Amnesty International accuses the Chadian Government of brutally suppressing opposition in the southern part of the

country. The organization claims that hundreds of people have been executed by government troops since August and appeals to the government to stop this practice. Hissene Habre has been trying to control the south since he took power in 1982. Recent reports appear to confirm the Amnesty charges, which reflect Chad's basic problem, the division between north and south.

#### Senegal

- 19 October Senegal, which has provided troops for the UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) since 1978, decides not to renew its contract and to withdraw its troops from UNIFIL. The government denies that discontent in the army is a factor in the decision.
- 25 November Municipal and rural elections are held and the governing Socialist Party, which was represented in all 37 municipalities and 318 rural districts, wins nearly all seats. Of 15 opposition parties, only 2 field candidates and only in certain areas. These elections clearly show the weaknesses of all the opposition parties.

#### EAST/CENTRAL AFRICA

##### Tanzania

- 12 November President Julius Nyerere is elected chairman of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) for the coming year at the OAU's summit meeting. Nyerere replaces Ethiopian leader Mengistu Haile Mariam as chairman.

##### Uganda

- 13 November According to diplomatic sources in Kampala, 200 North Korean soldiers arrive in Uganda on 13 November and are taken to camps in Luwero district. These soldiers are to help the Ugandan army fight insurgents. The first group of North Korean soldiers arrived in 1982 to provide training assistance to the Ugandan army. The number of North Korean military personnel in Uganda, including the latest contingent, is estimated to be between 500 and 700.

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continues in Zaire. In early November, 500 Chadian commandos complete training and are replaced by another 500 who arrive at the Commando Training Center in Kotakoli.

12-16 November Tanzanian-based rebels capture Moba, a town on Lake Tanganyika in Shaba Province. More than 100 rebels and a dozen civilians are killed when 300 Zairean paratroopers and ground forces drive the rebels out a few days later. The objective of the incursion appears to be to disturb public order before the swearing-in of Mobutu as President of the Republic and before the official visit to Zaire of French President Francois Mitterrand in December. It is also speculated that the fighting in Moba was the result of a mutiny in the Zairean army or may have been staged by elements loyal to Mobutu in a ploy to draw Western attention to the activities of opposition elements. The Zaire Committee in Belgium suggests that the mutiny may have been launched by the Parti de la Revolution Populaire which claims to have liberated certain zones in eastern Zaire.

#### WEST AFRICA

##### Gambia

9 November A Gambian National Army has been created for the first time. It consists of 2 platoons trained by a British Army team and the remains of the Field Force, Gambia's militia decimated in a 1981 coup attempt, for a total of 100 men. There are plans to enlarge the army. Formation of a National Army is due in part to Gambia's desire to avoid being totally dependent on Senegal for military protection in the Senegambian Confederation.

##### Guinea

1 November Trials of leading members of the Sekou Toure regime begin in secret in Conakry and are expected to last several weeks. Although Guinea's military government reportedly has been under pressure from Saudi Arabia and Morocco [supporters of Sekou Toure] to release some officials, they are all expected to stand trial. The trials, which demonstrate the military government's determination to remove all traces of the old regime, have met with popular support.

##### Liberia

9 November The Liberian Government announces a foiled coup attempt by "foreign terrorists." Unofficial sources say only that a shoot-out occurred between soldiers and two civilians, one an American. Head of State Doe is increasingly worried about his personal security as well as his growing unpopularity. The government charges may be designed to bolster Doe's international and domestic position.

## SOUTHERN AFRICA

### Angola

- 1 November      Angola agrees in principle to a phased withdrawal of Cuban troops in return for completion of the South African withdrawal from southern Angola and Namibian independence. The Angolan proposals offer to reduce the Cuban presence from about 30,000 troops to 10,000 and to redeploy the remaining Cubans to the Luanda and Cabinda areas.
- 10 November     UNITA invites a party of South African and foreign journalists to attend the final parade-ground ceremony of a 7-day extraordinary congress of 400 senior commanders at Jamba in south-eastern Angola. The congress reviewed two major offensives launched against UNITA by the Angolan government and studied implications of the recent negotiations involving South Africa, the United States and the MPLA on a withdrawal of some 30,000 Cubans from Angola. Jonas Savimbi, UNITA's leader, warns South Africa and the United States that he does not intend to be left out of the Namibia settlement talks.

### Botswana

- 31 October      The Botswana Defense Force (BDF) reports that a BDF vehicle is fired on by South African Defense Force (SADF) soldiers near Ngoma, northern Botswana, about 60 kms west of Kasane, site of an incident earlier in October. According to General Mompoti S. Merafle, the BDF soldiers are fired upon by two gun emplacements as they return to their base near Kasane while crossing the Ngoma bridge. No one is injured and the BDF does not return the fire.

### Malawi

- 19-23 October   Mozambican President Machel visits Malawi and signs a general cooperation agreement creating a joint commission on security, trade, transportation and communications, agricultural, and natural resources. Talks with Malawian authorities center around border security following attempts by RENAMO to create difficulties in relations between the two countries. Although Malawi's President Banda has expressed concern in the past over RENAMO activities which have disrupted trade from Mozambican ports to Malawi, it is the first time that the presidents of the two countries have met to try to find a solution to their mutual security problems.

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2 November

RENAMO rebels, charging that South African Foreign Minister R. F. Botha was a biased mediator, announce that they are abandoning peace negotiations in Pretoria with the Mozambican Government. This announcement dampens hope for a rapid cessation of RENAMO terrorist activities which are disrupting the already weak Mozambican economy.

6 November

It is announced by a RENAMO spokesman that a Sri Lankan captured earlier in the year was released on 4 November in the Malawi border village of Penca. The Sri Lankan had been working in Mozambique as an agricultural adviser in northern Zambezia Province. His kidnaping was another attempt by RENAMO to discourage foreign nationals from aiding in Mozambican development projects.

7 November

It is announced that RENAMO terrorists murdered 12 people and seriously injured 3 others during an attack on a village in Zambezia Province. It is the second massacre in the same area in 2 months. In the previous attack, 22 people were killed on a plantation. The continuing attacks are indicative of the failure of the ceasefire talks between RENAMO and Mozambican Government officials in Pretoria, South Africa, during October.

#### Namibia

1 November

The SWA Territorial Force begins the first phase of military registration of all men in Namibia between the ages of 17 and 54. The registration could involve between 250,000 and 300,000 Namibians and is compulsory--anyone refusing to register could face prosecution. News of the move evokes widespread condemnation from black nationalists and church leaders in the territory, who accuse the South African Government of trying to use Namibians for cannon-fodder in maintaining its control over the territory.

#### South Africa

5-6 November

An estimated 500,000 black workers refuse to go to work in the economically vital Transvaal Province over political and economic grievances. This massive work "stayaway" occurs in the area where two-thirds of South Africa's industry is located. The Johannesburg Chamber of Commerce estimates that at least 50 percent of the black work force in the Johannesburg industrial region, stretching from Pretoria in

the north to Vereeniging in the south, did not show up for work in one of the most successful general strikes ever waged by black workers.

13 November

The South African Government detains at least 7 union leaders connected with the work stayaway on 5-6 November. Among those in detention are Chris Dlamini, President of the Federation of South African Trade Unions (FOSATU), and Pirshaw Camay, General Secretary of the Council of Unions of South Africa (CUSA). The government action against the black unions is rapidly souring black labor relations, where major reforms have taken place since blacks were granted the right to have registered unions in 1979. FOSATU is calling for a "black Christmas" to protest the government's detentions and the firing of 6,000 black workers by SASOL, the parastatal synthetic fuels corporation. The Detainee's Parents Support Committee says more than 220 people are now being detained without trial.

13 November

Bishop Desmond Tutu, winner of this year's Nobel Peace Prize, is elected the first black Anglican bishop of the city of Johannesburg. The position gives Bishop Tutu the spiritual leadership of hundreds of thousands of Anglicans in Johannesburg.

14 November

South African security police detain white political activists today for the first time since the country's latest spate of unrest began in September. The detained include Kate Philip, President of the National Union of South African Students, and Guy Berger, a journalist said to have worked with the United Democratic Front, an alliance of groups opposed to the limited reforms that exclude the black majority from a qualified extension of political rights to people of Indian and mixed racial descent.

16 November

South African police round up 2,300 black workers in raids on the township of Sebokeng, south of Johannesburg, in the biggest mass arrest in years. Most of those seized for non-payment of rent and minor civil offenses pay fines and are released. In Pretoria, police confirm that an investigation is beginning to determine whether comments by Reverend Allan Boesak, President of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, contravened legislation prohibiting criticism of the police.

#### Zimbabwe

9 November

Senator Moven Ndlovu, a senior member of ZANU, Zimbabwe's ruling party, is assassinated sparking riots that leave 200 persons injured and several dead. The opposition ZAPU office in the town of Beitbridge is burned down by demonstrators and several ZAPU members are thrown into the fire. Prime Minister Robert Mugabe criticizes ZAPU, although its leader, Joshua Nkomo, disclaims responsibility for or knowledge of the shooting.

12-13 November Prime Minister Mugabe ousts the two remaining supporters of Joshua Nkomo in his cabinet, virtually ending cooperation in the government between the parties which had once formed the Patriotic Front, the governing ZANU and the opposition ZAPU. Minister of Home Affairs Simbi Mubako announces that he has intelligence linking ZAPU with dissidents supported by South Africa.